

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Acting Chairperson
Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

FEBRUARY 28, 2019
10:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211

SENATE BILL NO. 752
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 752. This bill appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources for statewide research and prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens. The Department of Agriculture supports this measure provided it does not impact the Department's priorities listed in the Executive Budget.

Ornamental ginger is a traditional component in island flower arrangements and is popular for use in home and commercial displays. Red and pink ginger flower bracts are used in lei making. Ornamental ginger is also used widely in landscaping and creates the tropical effect that symbolizes Hawaii. Decline in production in recent years caused the number of flowers available for sale.

Funding for Statewide surveillances and diagnostics of ornamental ginger pathogens will contribute towards curbing the spread of diseases and improve the profitability and the long-term sustainability of local ornamental and landscape production industries.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



SB-752

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 1:16:45 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Warren Watanabe	Testifying for Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	No

Comments:



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 10:30 a.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford
Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
And
Michael Bruno
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 752 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 752 relating to agriculture and ornamental ginger and which appropriates \$200,000 for fiscal years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 for statewide research and prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) supports this bill and we respectfully provide the following information to substantiate our position.

SB 752 is an example of the biosecurity issues facing agriculture in Hawai'i. Ornamental ginger is a valued plant that can be used as a shrub or as a cut flower. CTAHR scientists have been able to identify three different viruses and one fungal pathogen that are infecting ornamental ginger. In addition, the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) scientists have identified the presence of fourteen additional pathogens. At this time, it is not known which agent(s) is/are the primary cause of the decline being seen in ginger, and which are secondary pathogens infecting a weakened plant. Another question is whether the problem will expand to other islands; raising the possibility of a quarantine of ornamental ginger on Oahu.

It is the consensus of CTAHR and HDOA scientists that more diagnostics and a statewide survey is needed before quarantine should be considered. The HDOA has already provided funds of approximately \$120,000 in FY 2019 to address the situation and work has begun. An additional \$200,000 is being requested in this bill in order to complete the diagnostics, conduct a statewide survey, and to subsequently investigate the dieback issue and its solution.

Biosecurity issues like this happen. We never know when they will occur, what will be the scope of the problem, what may be the cause of the problem, and what will be the resulting solution. CTAHR's budget within UHM is not equipped to consistently address such issues. While we have the expertise in both research and extension, the funding is unavailable. This bill addresses that lack of funding for fiscal years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021; and hopefully brings this issue to a successful conclusion.

We support this bill provided that its passage is in addition to priorities as indicated in our Board of Regent Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association

THE SENATE
THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2019

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 28, 2019, 10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 211
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

SB752 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE: Makes an appropriation to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources for research and prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens.


My name is Eric S. Tanouye and I am the President for the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association. HFNA is a statewide umbrella organization with approximately 300 members. Our membership is made up with breeders, hybridizers, propagators, growers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, educators, and the allied industry, which supports our efforts in agriculture.

The Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association (HFNA) **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 752**

Ornamental ginger is a popular tropical flower that could be considered to be symbols of the beauty of Hawaii. For our Nurserymen and women to continue to grow and provide this product it is important we find solutions to the pathogens that threaten the ornamental ginger and avoid the spreading of this disease to neighbor Island producers.

If you have any questions at this time, I would be happy to discuss them and can be reached by phone at 808-959-3535 ext 22, cell 960-1433 and email eric@greenpointnursery.com.

Supporting Agriculture and Hawaii,


Eric S. Tanouye
President
Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association



February 26, 2019

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony in Support of SB 752, Relating to Agriculture (Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UHCTAHR) for research and prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens.)

Thursday, February 28, 2019, 10:30 a.m., in Conference Room 211

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of SB 752.**

SB 752. This bill proposes to make an appropriation to the UHCTAHR for statewide research of pathogens affecting ornamental ginger and prevention of pathogen spread.

LURF's Position. Invasive species such as insects, disease-bearing organisms, snakes, weeds, and other pests pose the greatest threat to Hawaii's economy, tourism, agriculture, the natural environment, native species and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people. Invasive species already cause millions of dollars in crop losses, the extinction of native species, the destruction of native wet, moist and dry land forests, and the spread of disease, but even more harmful viral, fungal and unidentified bacterial pathogens such as the unknown pathogen causing devastating crop decline in ornamental ginger in windward Oahu, now threaten to invade all of the Hawaiian Islands and wreak further damage.

Despite initial efforts by the UHCTAHR and the Department of Agriculture to address this critical situation, more research and a multi-agency outreach approach is necessary to avoid further damage to the profitability and long-term sustainability of local ornamental and landscape production industries.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports SB 752** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.



Board of Directors 2018 - 2020

President
Joshua Uyehara

Vice-President
Warren Mayberry

Secretary
Dawn Bicoy

Treasurer
Laurie Yoshida

Directors-at-Large
Alan Takemoto
Adolf Helm
Leslie Campaniano
Dan Clegg
Joshua Uyehara
Warren Mayberry

President Emeritus
Alan Takemoto

Executive Director
Bennette Misalucha

TESTIMONY FROM BENNETTE MISALUCHA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In Support of SB752
Relating to Agriculture

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
February 28, 2019, 10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 211

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) supports SB752, which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources for research and prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens.

The decline of ornamental ginger on Oahu for the past 10 years due to viruses and fungi is extremely concerning and detrimental to agriculture in Hawaii. Ginger producers have not only had to excavate their lands but there is concern among neighboring farmers and off-island clientele about the spread of the unknown pathogens.

Research is needed to mitigate the potential spread of ornamental ginger pathogens and to ensure the long-term sustainability of local ornamental and landscape production industries.

Please vote in support of SB752 to fund this important statewide research. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Bennette Misalucha
Executive Director, Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.

SB-752

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 1:28:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John R. Gordines	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senators Donovan De La Cruz, Chair and Gilbert S.C.Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

My name is John Gordines. I am the president of Hawaii Tropical Flowers & Foliage Association (HTFFA) -Kauai Chapter

I am writing to you in support of appropriating funding for SB752 to UH College of Tropical Agriculture to conduct research and prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens. This has been an ongoing issue with our ornamental ginger farmers on Oahu. If this problem is not funded and addressed very soon it will have significant impacts on the production and marketing of ornamental gingers statewide. It is currently isolated on Oahu and our fear is that there is a possibility that it may spread to the outer islands! As you may know Hawaiian tropical flowers and nursery products generate approximately \$77,000,000 annually to the revenue of the state of Hawaii.

Your consideration is passing this bill and moving it forward we be highly appreciated to the flower and nursery growers and exporters in Hawaii.

"Flowers feed the soul!"

Respectfully submitted,

John Gordines, President, HTFFA-Kauai

SB-752

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 4:30:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
J Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass SB 752.

Research funding is desperately needed to find a solution to the devastating diseases affecting ornamental ginger in Hawaii, a very popular flower and staple of the floriculture industry. Many local farmers are being forced to look for other options or cut back on their operations.

Thank you for your support for Hawaii's farmers and ranchers.

LATE

SB-752

Submitted on: 2/27/2019 11:23:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lawrence Ford	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support for our agricultural community is a must for our state.

Multiple testifiers SB 752

Tom Mendes
Helena Miguel
David G Rietow
Dana Christiansen
melvin kunitake
Alan Tada
Sandi Kato-Klutke
Susan Mulkern
LUANA BECK
Valerie Correa
Larry Jefts
Alvin Tsuruda
Annette Niles
Nelo Gonz lez
Heidi Watanabe
Patricia E Iwamoto
James Tavares
Jari Sugano
Janice Balauro
Sherwood Conant
donald sommer
Donald Lau
Mark Phillipson
Marc Beaulieu
Roy Asao

Jerry Nishek
Charles Pikcunas
Melvin Kunitake
Laila Jayyousi
Tamara Lupoloff
BRENDA IOKEPA-MOSES
Randy Cabral
Randy Yokoyama
Melvin Matsuda
Rodney & Karol Haraguchi
Philippe Visintainer
Carolynn Lum
Joni Kamiya
Nicole Correa
Alan Van Zee
Robert Paull
Luly Unemori
TinMyaing Thein
Winifred Marcos
Mark O Connor
Aran Sendan
Grayson Inouye
Leann Lum
Megan Kono

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I support SB 752, which makes an appropriation (\$200,000) to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources for research and prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens.

The unknown spread of the virus and the fungi has devastated many farmers on Windward side of Oahu, forcing farmers to grow other types of ornamental flowers and slowing down their operations. Research funding is necessary for growers and researchers to continue their efforts in finding a solution and the cause of the decline.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Mahalo!